



Clean Water is Everybody's Business

Nonpoint Source Pollution
Awareness Month

March 2003



A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



"I believe water is the biggest environmental issue we face in the 21st century in terms of both quantity and quality. In the 30 years since its passage, the Clean Water Act has dramatically increased the number of waterways that are once again safe for fishing and swimming. Despite this great progress in reducing water pollution, many of the Nation's waters still do not meet water quality goals. I challenge you to join President Bush and me to finish the business of restoring and protecting our nation's waters for present and future generations."

...Christie Whitman

The Basics...



- Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, or polluted runoff, occurs when water runs over land or through the ground, picks up pollutants, and deposits them in surface waters or introduces them into ground water
- Many people don't realize that polluted runoff is the nation's leading source of water quality degradation

Make the right choice...



- The choices we make in our communities, businesses, and as individuals will help keep America's waters clean
- Pesticides, fertilizers, dirt, oil, pet waste, manure, and trash are just a few of the many pollutants that rainfall picks up when it washes over our farms, city streets, and even our yards

In the yard...



- Fertilizers, weed killers, and pesticides misapplied to lawns and gardens can wash into our streams and rivers where they can cause algae blooms and fish kills
- Yard wastes such as grass clippings, garden and yard trimmings, and leaves can also wash into water bodies and contribute to algae problems
- Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and nutrients that also make our water unsafe

Water Friendly Yard Tips



- Reduce impervious surfaces
- Plant native plants and grasses suited for local rainfall
- Pick up after your pet
- Minimize use of lawn and garden chemicals and follow the labels to apply responsibly
- Compost your yard waste
- Direct downspouts away from paved areas

On the farm...



- Polluted runoff from agriculture is a leading source of impairments to our rivers and lakes
- Overgrazing and the over-application of pesticides, fertilizers, and manure all contribute to polluted runoff from agricultural areas

Water Friendly Farm Tips



- Use Best Management Practices such as contour farming, stream buffers, and conservation tillage to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff
- Implement nutrient management plans
- Properly handle and store farm chemicals such as fuel, fertilizer, and pesticide
- Minimize chemical pesticide use; adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques

In the city...



- Much of the land is covered by buildings and pavement that don't allow water to soak into the ground
- Because of impervious surfaces like pavement and rooftops, a typical city block generates more than 5 times more runoff than a woodland area of the same size
- Stormwater runoff carries pollutants such as oil, dirt, chemicals, and road salt directly to streams and rivers, where they seriously harm water quality

Water Friendly Building Tips



- The following Low Impact Development (LID) practices can help prevent polluted runoff:
 - *Conserve open spaces and natural areas*
 - *Use grassed swales to filter and slow parking lot runoff*
 - *Design developments which minimize impervious areas and maximize infiltration opportunities*
 - *Install rain gardens to slow and filter rainwater from downspouts*
- For more information on LID practices, visit www.epa.gov/nps/lid

For More Information...



- Contact Shakeba Carter-Jenkins, EPA Office of Water, at (202) 564-6385 or Don Waye, EPA Nonpoint Source Control Branch, at (202) 566-1170
- Visit www.epa.gov/nps